

# The *Usul* of the Khawarij

## Ahlut-Tawhid Publications

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A Translated Audio of an Explanation in Regard to the Fundamentals of the Khawarij

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# The *Usul* of the Khawarij

ALL PRAISE BELONGS to Allah. And may the *salah* and *salam* [of Allah] our Prophet Muhammad in perpetuity. As for what follows...

The brother asks about the *usul* of the school of thought of the Khawarij since the people today use this phrase and this group in a multiple of ways. Many of them do not differentiate and a lot of the people classify others by assumptions, doubts, and without certainty. The Khawarij are the first group and sect that appeared in this *ummah*, and the Prophet spoke about them; he said, “A group of people will appear among you whose *salah*, fasting, and deeds will make you think little of your own *salah*, fasting, and deeds. They will pass through Islam like an arrow passes through game.” The Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said, “If I should live up to their time, I will kill them as the people of ‘Ad were killed (i.e. all of them).” And the Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) said, “Kill them wherever you find them.”

These Khawarij make *takfir* upon sins in totality. They make *takfir* upon the *kaba’ir* (major sins). So, the major sinner such as the alcohol drinker, fornicator, consumer of interest, they take him outside the fold of Islam. They declare his blood and wealth lawful. They also view the lands of the people of sins and disobedience, or who they believe as sinners when in reality they did not sin, as lands of war. They believe in fighting the leaders of justice and unleashing the sword against them. They would make *takfir* upon ‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, and those with them. For this reason, the *Sahabah* (*radiyallahu ‘anhum*) fought them. But many of the *Sahabah* such as ‘Ali (*radiyallahu ‘anhu*), who took authority in fighting them, did not view them as

*kuffar*. And this is why ‘Ali nor any of his companions would not finish off their wounded. ‘Ali would not allow initiating the fight against them, as well. He would say, “If they fight you, then fight them.”

This group is the first sect that appeared in Islam. It appeared during the era of ‘Ali (*radiyallahu ‘anhu*), and he is the one who took charge in fighting them. This group has remained present until this time, and they still have remnants in Oman called *al-Ibadiyah*, and they are from the Khawarij. In our times, they are Jahmiyyah in the topic of the names and attributes of Allah. The *Rawafid* in the *asma* (labels) and *abkam* (rulings) of the *din* are Khawarij in this aspect when it comes to the *Sababah*. And when it comes to the rulings of *iman*, they are from the extreme Murjiah. They combined between two contradictory beliefs. This is similar to many people in this day and age. Those who call others Khawarij, while they are Khawarij with the scholars and callers, and Murjiah with the rulers. Thus they are defined by the saying, “She accused me of something; she then snuck away.”

As for those who call others Khawarij for making *takfir* upon nullifies of Islam, this is an oppressive label which Allah sent down no authority or evidence for. What necessitates from that is that the *Sababah* are Khawarij, the leaders of guidance would be Khawarij, and the four *aimmah* would be Khawarij and that ibn Taymiyyah would be from the heads of the Khawarij, since he is among those who spoke the most about these matters. However, Ahlus-Sunnah unanimously agree that everyone who comes with a saying, action, or belief which negates the foundation of *iman* and does not agree with it, then he has come with *kufr*.

Yes, the scholars may differ on the *shurut* and *mawani’* (i.e. the conditions and preventatives of *takfir*). They could differ on the *hukm* (i.e. ruling upon certain individuals). However, this is not from the school of thought of the Khawarij; this is from the schools of thought from Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama‘ah.

The *Sababah* disputed concerning the Khawarij; are they *kuffar* or not? Most of them adopted that they are not *kuffar*. Whereas a group among them made *takfir* upon them such as Abu Umamah and ibn ‘Umar. Those who made *takfir* did not call others Murjiah, and those who didn’t make *takfir* upon them did

not call those who made as being Khawarij.

The early leading scholars differed over making *takfir* of the Rafidah that cursed the companions, *takfir* of the Mu'tazilah, and *takfir* of some other sects. They, meaning the leading scholars, were brothers who loved each other despite their differences over this. Because this returns back to *shurut* and *mawani'*, or whether the *hukm* nullifies the foundation of *iman* or not. And an example of that was the dispute among the leading scholars of the *Tabi'in* concerning the disbelief of al-Hajjaj. Al-Hasan al-Basri, 'Umar ibn 'Abdil-'Aziz, and Mujahid, the companion of ibn 'Abbas *al-mufassir (radiyallahu 'anhu)* leaned towards the *kufr* or *takfir* of al-Hajjaj, and they viewed him as an apostate outside the fold of Islam. Al-Hasan al-Basri would make *du'a* against him in his lessons and curse him, and there was not a single gathering except that he would make *du'a* against him and curse him. But Imam Muhammad ibn Sirin and a group of leading scholars differed with them on this. They viewed that al-Hajjaj did not come with a nullifier. Al-Hasan and his companions and those who agreed with him, would not say that ibn Sirin is a *Murji'i*. Likewise, ibn Sirin and those who agreed with him would not say that al-Hasan and those with him are Khawarij, since this was purely based upon *ijtihad* and knowledge, not based upon *bid'ah*. For instance, the scholars disagreed over the one who abandons the *salah*: does he disbelieve or not? Even though a consensus has been narrated from the *Sahabah (radiyallahu 'anhum)* that he is a *kafir* a group of leading scholars after the *Sahabah* disagreed with that. They did not make *takfir* of the one who abandons *salah*. And so if this was based upon *ijtihad*, knowledge, and analysis, then this is their right as being *mujtahidin*, as it is the opinion of Malik, ash-Shafi'i, and Ahmad in one narration.

But if this was based upon the pretext that *salah* is an action, and the one who abandons actions does not disbelieve, then this is a *bid'ah*. Because this contradicts the school of thought of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah that *kufr* can be through actions and its abandonment, just like it could be through speech and belief. Moreover, I would like to draw towards an important point. A scholar may agree with the Khawarij on an issue based upon knowledge and *ijtihad*, but he would not be considered a *Khariji*. He could agree with the *Murjiah* on an issue based on knowledge and *ijtihad*, but he would not be

considered a *Murji*, also. A scholar is not tagged along with a group until he adopts a fundamental from their fundamentals, or until he has many individual traits (of that sect) which resembles their fundamentals. So the one who says that the major sinners are *kuffar*, then this person is from the Khawarij, and we will say he is a *Khariji*. Or the one who says that the foundation of all the people is *kufr* and does not affirm the Islam of anyone until he himself investigates and confirms, and views the lands of the Muslims are land of war; this person is from the Khawarij. The opposite of this is the one who says that the nullifiers of Islam that deal with actions are restricted to *juhud* (denial) and *istiblal* (declaring it permissible); this person is a *Murji Jahmi*. Hence, the talk concerning the nullifiers of Islam is not the school of thought of the Khawarij. Rather, this is a fundamental from the fundamentals of Ahlus-Sunnah. And this is an unanimously agreed upon matter.

The most enormous virtue of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (*radiyallahu 'anhu*) is fighting the people of apostasy. They would perform *salah*, fast, perform *hajj*, give charity, testify that *la ilaha illallah* and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. Yet, the *Sahabah* did not dispute concerning making of *takfir* of them. Because everyone who comes with a nullifier, even if he says *la ilaha illallah* a thousand times in a day and has not made *tawbah* from this nullifier, is a *kafir*. The one who testifies that *la ilaha illallah* and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and then testified that Musaylamah is a prophet, is a *kafir* by consensus, even if he performs *salah*, fasts, and claims to be a Muslim. The one who says that *zina* is *halal*, or says drinking alcohol is *halal*, or says consuming *riba* is *halal*, his disbelief is clear cut in Islam.

A group of people became defeated due to the pressure of others, claiming that this is the school of thought of the Khawarij. Therefore, they stepped down from the constants of the *din*, and one of them would become so frightened from the matters of *takfir* that even if it was directed to the outcast *Shaytan* he would fear he would be labeled from the Khawarij or their figureheads, and so forth. The *haqq* must be conveyed. Let not the amount of rebuke from so-and-so or the praise of so-and-so stop you from saying the truth. Whether over here and over there, the truth is truth, and falsehood is falsehood. So whoever is pleased is pleased and whoever is angered is angered,

because this is the *din* of Allah (*jalla wa 'ala*).

These people who classify others falsely, woe to them, and woe to them! These people who inflict punishment in the *dunya*, they will be held to account on the Day of Resurrection because this is a form of oppression, and there is no despicable sin that Allah hastens His punishment than the one who oppresses and cuts off family-ties. This is from the transgression against others. And at the same time, it is considered deterring people away from the path of Allah and false accusations. The Prophet (*sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said about slander, “If what you said about him is true, then you have backbit him. But if what you said is not true, then you have slandered him!” This is what slander is! This *hadith* was collected by Imam Muslim in his *sahih* from the *hadith* of Abu Hurayah (*radiyallahu 'anhu*).

Whoever is confused with anything regarding this, then he should look at the guidance of the *Sahabah* in their traditions. Let him read the works of the leading scholars. Let him read the verdicts of ibn Taymiyyah, along with the books of ibnul-Qayyim. Let him read from *Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah* by the leading scholars of the *Najdi da'wah*. Let him look at who is more deserving of being labeled this or that and who is closer towards the path of guidance. Allah (*jall wa 'ala*) says, “Say, “Each [of us] is waiting; so wait. For you will know who are the companions of the sound path and who is guided.”